



N-993 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
STATE CAPITOL
LANSING, MI 48913
PHONE: (517) 373-0832
TOLL-FREE: (877) 262-5959
FAX: (517) 373-5763
www.gophouse.com/shaffer.htm

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP
RICK SHAFFER
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEES
CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES
VICE CHAIR, JOINT CAPITAL OUTLAY
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH

November 28, 2006

**Testimony in support of HB 6392 presented to
House Health Policy Committee
November 28th 2006.**

- When PA 368 of 1978 was amended earlier this year it allowed individuals who had retired from areas within the medical profession to obtain a special dispensation to be able to practice in the volunteer sector.
- However, the dental profession was overlooked in the categories covered; one of my constituents, a retired dentist, asked me to develop a bill that would consider legislation that would include dentists. I discussed the situation with Representative Newell, sponsor of the original legislation who encouraged me to get the bill drawn up to cover the oversight, and I thank you Mr. Chairman and Committee Members for today's consideration.

- To recap the background of the original legislation passed last February, we all recognize that there are a vast number of uninsured persons residing in our state, estimated to be around one million people. Without health insurance people often forgo or delay medical treatment, and certainly this applies to dental care. Although there are some that can get coverage under special programs like Medicaid, many fall between the gaps.
- Throughout Michigan, free or low-cost clinics try to meet the needs of the under insured, their volunteer staff includes dedicated medical professionals who do not receive compensation for their services. These include retired physicians who offer their skills to clinics serving the indigent.
- Recently passed HB now provides these health care professionals the ability to practice without the expense of requiring full time licensure and medical liability insurance.
- Their contribution to society, will assist some low-income persons without health insurance and Medicaid recipients to receive timely medical services with the limited license created under the amendment to PA 368 of 1978 in February of 2006.
- My bill would extend that same option to retired dentists. I have received several telephone calls to my office from dentists who support this opportunity to help their communities. A workgroup was

recently convened at the direction of Rep. Gaffney and Stacey Hettiger invited interested parties to attend. The input was favorable and therefore we bring this bill to the committee today, asking for support, with the hope that we can complete it prior to the end of session.

- This bill mirrors recently passed HB as with other medical professionals, dentists would have to document to the Dept of Community Health that they previously had a license in good standing prior to expiration, and acknowledge that payment or compensation would not be expected or received. The form provided for retired physicians by the Department of Community Health for submission to the appropriate licensing board would have to document that the physician plus some continuing education requirements.
- This legislation addresses an omission of the dental profession and if passed will enhance the previous legislation. I would ask the committee to support this very worthwhile concept.
- Thank you for your time and attention and I am happy to answer any questions you might have.